

WIC INFANT FORMULAS

Effective: August 1, 2003

Standard Formulas: Rebate (No prescription required)

Standard infant formulas for normal infant nutrition—contract with Ross Products, a division of Abbott Laboratories:

Milk-Based

Similac Advance
Similac with Iron

Soy-Based

Similac Isomil with Iron
Similac Isomil Advance

Lactose-Free

Similac Lactose Free

Formulas for Medical Conditions: Full Retail (Prescription required)

These formulas are mostly available through Medi-Cal and, except where noted, please do NOT request them through WIC for Medi-Cal enrollees. WIC provides these formulas in cases where an infant is not eligible for Medi-Cal, but **only** with a prescription justifying medical necessity **and** verification of Medi-Cal ineligibility.

<u>Hypoallergenic</u>	<u>Premature Transitional</u>	<u>Toddler</u>	<u>Gastro- Intestinal*</u>
Alimentum	Similac NeoSure Advance	PediaSure	Enfamil AR*
Nutramigen LIPIL	Enfamil EnfaCare LIPIL		Carnation Good Start Supreme*

Note: Additional formulas for medical conditions are available by special order—may take longer.

* These products are not currently authorized as a benefit of Medi-Cal

WIC believes that good health begins with breastfeeding. Please do your part to support mothers to successfully breastfeed their infants.

For more information, contact your local WIC agency. Find them at: www.wicworks.ca.gov
8/1/03

June 25, 2003

Dear Health Care Provider:

We are writing to announce that the California Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program—better known as “WIC”—will implement a new infant formula rebate contract with Ross Products, a division of Abbott Laboratories, effective August 1, 2003. WIC’s position is that good health begins with breastfeeding, and the Program commits significant resources to promoting and supporting breastfeeding. However, WIC offers infant formula for infants who are not exclusively breastfed. The change in sole source rebate contract will affect all participating WIC infants who receive formula. It will also bring about revisions to WIC’s policies regarding the authorization of standard infant formulas that are not part of our contract with Ross Products. We hope to enlist your support as we implement the new contract and policies, as well as answer any questions you may have about the process.

Beginning August 1, 2003, the WIC primary contract infant formulas will include the following:

Milk-Based

Similac Advance
Similac with Iron

Soy-Based

Similac Isomil
Similac Isomil Advance

Lactose-Free

Similac Lactose Free

We request your support during this transition between brands of standard infant formula provided by WIC, as the vast majority of infants tolerate and thrive on any standard cow milk or soy based formula. WIC staff has experience transitioning between infant formula contracts and will assist parents and medical providers with making this change.



Do your part to help California save energy. To learn more about saving energy, visit the following web site:
www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html

Background

Like many hospitals and health maintenance organizations, WIC has sole source contracts for infant formula and some other foods. In fact, WIC is required by federal law to obtain a competitive bid on infant formula for cost containment. The income generated from infant formula rebates alone enables the WIC Program to provide nutrition services and nutritious foods to over 400,000 additional WIC participants each month in California, 23 percent of whom are infants. For the past eight years, the contract has been with Mead Johnson Nutritionals, the makers of Enfamil with Iron and Prosobee. This contract, therefore, represents a significant change for many WIC families.

Formula Policy Revisions

As part of the transition, WIC policies related to infant formulas will also be consolidated and simplified in order to maximize the cost savings and to reduce workload and complex paperwork. Therefore, the California WIC Program will **no longer** provide cow milk and soy standard infant formulas that are not part of our contract.

Action Requested

1. **Be prepared to assist in educating parents about transitioning their babies to the new products.** As infants participating in WIC come to your office during July and August, expect that parents may have questions about WIC formulas. We are clear that many parents will feel anxious about this change. Your role in educating and reassuring them is critical to their comfort level. Please educate your patients about an infant's ability to tolerate slight differences in formula; thereby encouraging the use of WIC's standard formulas.
2. **Assist in educating parents about enhanced fatty acids in infant formulas.** Some of the new formulas contain enhanced fatty acids, commonly referred to as DHA and ARA. Parents may also have questions about these enhancements. Our position on these enhancements is neutral, since:
 - The federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved their use in infant formulas; and
 - Their benefits for full term infants have not been conclusively established.

Flyer on WIC Formulas

Enclosed for you/your staff's reference is a flyer listing the infant formulas provided by California WIC. This flyer shows the standard formulas WIC will provide starting in August. We encourage you to provide this information about WIC's infant formulas to your staff.

Formulas Prescribed for Medical Conditions

When an infant has a specific diagnosis and requires a special formula to treat a medical condition, health insurance, such as Medi-Cal, is the primary payer. As a service, WIC provides these formulas on a temporary basis for participants not enrolled in Medi-Cal, until the participant can complete the application and enrollment process. If a formula, including Enfamil AR and Carnation Good Start Supreme, cannot be obtained through Medi-Cal, WIC will provide it, but the physician must submit a prescription to WIC staff, renewed every three months. WIC will issue the following products through WIC checks:

Formula Type

Thickened, milk-based
Modified protein
Casein hydrolysate

Premature

Pediatric Calorie Supplement

Authorized Product(s)

Enfamil AR
Carnation Good Start Supreme
Nutramigen LIPIL
Alimentum
Similac NeoSure Advance
Enfamil EnfaCare LIPIL

Pediasure

Requested Action

1. **Implement the usual process** for receiving authorization for formulas needed to treat a medical condition through Medi-Cal.
2. **Complete a Medical Justification Form** to receive a therapeutic formula through WIC when:
 - Your patient is not enrolled in Medi-Cal;
 - Your patient is covered by an insurance other than Medi-Cal; or
 - The prescribed formula is Carnation Good Start Supreme or Enfamil AR.

Thank you for supporting WIC's transition to new standard formulas and the changes to policy. WIC's mission is to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants and young children who are at nutritional risk by providing nutritious foods, information on healthy eating, breastfeeding and other parenting issues, and referrals to health and other needed services. The infant formula rebate contract and policies that limit the

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provision of other products help us to implement this mission for the greatest number of Californians possible.

If you have questions about a specific patient's needs, please contact your local WIC program staff. You can locate your local WIC agency at www.wicworks.ca.gov or by calling 1-888-WIC-WORKS (1-888-942-9675). If you have questions about our formula rebate contract or formula policies, please contact Michele vanEyken, RD, MPH, Deputy Branch Chief, Nutrition Programs, WIC Supplemental Nutrition Branch at (916) 928-8765 or by email at mvaneyke@dhs.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

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Enclosure